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WASHING DAY.

HERE we are, Nellie, Bessie, and Ann. Here's Dolly too; and all this bustle is on her account. For, don't you see, it's washing-day, and "All for Dolly,"—so says Ann as she plunges her fat arms into the tub, and scrubs away, at the same time giving wise directions to her sisters about "putting out the clothes on the line." Dolly sits on the floor by the wash-bench, waiting very patiently for some of the clothes to be "done up," so that she can be fairly dressed.

Don't you wish you were there, little girl?

For the best of it is, these busy little laundresses are all good-natured. They're not fretting at all. Each is content with her part of the work; and that makes it a very happy company.

It isn't always so when little folks get together. I have seen something very different. Grace came in and found Sister Alice and Baby Charley having a

nice time on the floor, playing with her "Chinese puzzle." They were not harming it; for Alice is careful, and she watched Charley to see that he didn't break it: but Grace was very angry,—what a pity, when she has such a pretty name!—and she ran at them, and roughly snatched the puzzle away; and that made Charley cry, and Alice feel badly. Alice ought to have asked leave of Grace before she took the puzzle, it's true: but how much better it would have been if Grace had said, "I am afraid baby will break this, sister Alice; but, if you'll be very careful, you may keep it a while;" or if she had gently taken it away, and had started some pleasant little play in which all three of them could have joined!

Little boys and girls, there is a right way and a wrong way to play. Did you ever think of it? Try now, the next time you play, to remember that you can make your mates very happy by being kind and

unselfish. If you can read this, you are not too young to "play like a Christian."

For the Child at Home.

WHEN THE DARK COMES.

A little boy had been very willful, and had grieved his mother sadly. She loved him, and could not bear to punish him; so she tried in every way to make him obey her. But he would have his own way, and screamed so loudly, that people passing by looked up at the windows, thinking that some one was injuring a little child. At last a rod was tried, and that brought him to terms. Then his mother talked gently with him about his sin, and asked him, "When do you think you will be a good boy?"

"When the dark comes," replied little Harry with tearful eyes and pouting lips.

"When the dark comes," a great many children, who do not fear God in the daylight, think of him, and wish to please him, and to know that he is not angry with them. They are very brave while the sun shines, and their parents and friends are moving about. They can whoop and shout and play; sometimes they can quarrel, steal, and swear: but when the shadows fall, and they are alone in their beds, with no friend near them, they think of their sins, and are afraid of God. He comes down and talks with them in the silence to draw their hearts to him. Thus it is well, if they have sinned, to think of him, and seek his pardon, "when the dark comes," if they have not done so before.

Life is a long day which God has given us in which to prepare for the night of death. Many sing and sport and sin through all the long bright hours, promising, like little Harry, to repent and obey "when the dark comes." They waste the golden moments of youth, and keep for God's service the time of sickness and old age. This is mocking him, and such as do it are often cut off in their sins. They look forward to the days of darkness, when they can no longer enjoy sin, and promise them to God; but for them "the dark" never comes. Their sun goes down at noonday, and they must meet God as they are, all unprepared.

God calls the youth to remember him, and gives sweet promises to those who seek him early. Bewise, then, and turn to Him who loves you, while the sun is bright; for "the dark" may never come to you.

J. D. C.

For the Child at Home.

THE SECRET MARK.

A young man who was engaged in a store was suspected of stealing,—taking money from the drawer, or putting money into his own pocket that he had received for goods sold. A trap was made to catch him. One of his employers went to a friend, and putting in his hand two bank-bills, upon each of which was a secret mark, requested him to go to the

store at a certain hour and purchase some article of the suspected clerk, and use that money in payment. The merchant had previously so arranged matters that this clerk should be alone in the store at that hour, and thus have an opportunity of committing the theft if so disposed.

His friend called, and made the purchase. The merchant came in, and, examining his cash-drawer, found that the money which he knew had been paid was not there. A police-officer was quietly called and the young man was summoned to a private room. Then, in the officer's presence, he was obliged to show all the money in his possession. Among it were the two bills bearing the secret mark. The culprit was confounded when he understood the overwhelming proof of his guilt, and at length confessed that for some time he had been pursuing this wicked course. But it was the secret mark that betrayed him.

I knew that young man. I pitied him for his fall; and I know that many prayers from many hearts were offered, that, from that time, he might become a changed and a better man. But I have told his story because I want to tell you of another mark.

Did you ever think that every sin has its secret mark, — a mark that is sure to betray the sinner? It is not always, nor indeed often, a mark made by another, as in this case, to detect a criminal; but it is made by the criminal himself. Sometimes it leads to his detection here in this world by his fellow-men. Always it betrays his guilt to God.

What is that mark? I might tell you of the proofs of his crime a criminal often leaves behind him, — of the footprints, the marks of bloody hands, the dropped article of which he is the known owner, the false entries in account-books, the letters from his associates in sin; of many things which lead to the discovery of the author of a wicked deed. But there is another mark besides all these, — a secret mark. God sees it at the instant the deed is done: men often find out that it has been made, from the troubled looks, the changing countenance, the downcast eye, the anxious, nervous manner, the talking of the guilty one in sleep, the strange eagerness to prevent others from suspecting wrong, the flight of the culprit to escape detection, and sometimes by his crowning other sins with the awful crime of self-murder. The secret mark is *on the heart*; deep, dark, terrible. Conscience, the faithful monitor, knows it and ceaselessly upbraids the sinner. What wonder that men often discover, from the proofs of which I have told you, that the mark has been made, though they never see it?

And this secret mark upon the heart is one which every one makes when he commits sin. Dear young friends, don't think your sins are not of much consequence because they seem to you *little*. There are no *little* sins with God. When you do what you know to be wicked in the sight of God, you show just that spirit, which, if it lives and grows unchanged, may lead you to the commission of the worst crimes of which you ever heard.

Have you any of these dark, sad marks upon your hearts? Nothing but the precious blood of the Crucified One can wash them out. He will cleanse the heart of that child who asks him to do it.

Uncle Paul.

For the Child at Home.

"I AM READY TO GO."

It was bed-time for little Arthur, and in his white night-dress, with folded hands, he knelt by his aunty to pray. He asked God to take care of his absent father and mother; of Freddie, his older brother; and of the baby; then offered that prayer so sweet for the children: —

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.
And this I ask for Jesus' sake."

So earnest were his petitions, and so full of confi-

dence was he that he should be answered, that his prayer formed a strong contrast to many from older lips. After kissing his aunty good-night, he looked up once more, and said, "Now, if my Father in heaven wants me to go home to him to-night, I am ready to go." Sweet words of childlike trust in God! Are they not a lesson to us, so "slow of heart to believe"? Vividly do they call to mind these words of Jesus: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

At another time Arthur said to his mother, "If I should go to heaven, you would not feel badly, would you, mother? I should come and see you every day, though I should be a spirit, and you could not see me. Perhaps God would think best for baby and I to go together; then we should both come and see you every day."

Arthur was only four years old; but the good seed which had been sown was springing up abundantly. Such fair-haired little teachers there are among us. Unconsciously to themselves, their tiny feet would lead us upwards. Parents, while you daily give instruction, have always an open heart, and you will daily receive. Like Mary of old, you will find many sayings to keep and "ponder in your hearts."

S. W. P.



For the Child at Home.

GRANDMA'S FIRE-PICTURES.

"What do you see in the fire, Lily? You've been watching it a long while."

"Oh, grandma, lots of things! I saw a beautiful baby-house with doors and windows; and by and by one end of it fell down, and there was the inside all filled with gold dishes and chairs and tables; and then I saw a boy on a horse, and a dog and a hen, and I can't tell how many things besides. But you've been very still, too, grandma. Haven't you been seeing pictures in the fire?"

"Yes, dear; I have been thinking and looking; and I suppose my thoughts have had a great deal to do with the pictures I have seen. Beneath that large coal at the end of the grate I saw the old kitchen where I spent so many happy days when I was a child like you. My father and mother, my brothers George and John, and my sisters Jane and Ruth and Mary, were there; all were gathered about the great, wide, open fire-place, where the long sticks of wood burned brightly; and father was reading the Bible for our evening worship."

"We were all very happy. Then a piece of the coal fell off, and I saw the chamber where I knelt by my dear mother while she taught me to pray. Then I made a great many pictures from the crumbling

coals. There were sad times and happy times, — weddings and funerals and thanksgiving-days and meetings and partings, — till at last I seemed to awake as if from a dream, and here I was with my little Lily.

"And before I spoke to you, dear, I had been thinking, if I could go back again to my childhood, knowing all that I have since learned, I would in many things act very differently from what I then did. I do not think I was more thoughtless than most little folks; but there's many an unkind word, Lily dear, that I never would speak again to father or mother, or brothers or sisters; there's many an act of disobedience or selfishness which it grieves me now to renece. I believe the merciful Saviour, to whom I have confessed my sin, has forgiven me; but, ah, darling! the pictures I have seen in the fire make me feel that, could I be young again, I would be more kind and loving far than I was to some over whose heads the grass and flowers have grown for many a year!"

And grandma gently stroked little Lily's head, and smiled kindly on her through tearful eyes.

If you should live to be old and gray-haired, what kind of pictures would you see in the fire? I can tell if you will tell me how you are treating the dear ones at home.

Victor.

For the Child at Home.

BILLY'S CHICKEN.

BY JENNY BRADFORD.

Don't you remember what an army of turkeys we sent down to re-enforce the army of the Potomac last Thanksgiving? One of our captains told me a little thing you may like to hear, too, about what they did in his mess. You know, I suppose, that the "mess" is the company of officers or men that eat, not at the same table exactly, — but off the same log, or whatever it is. He said, when they opened their box of goodies, one of the lieutenants pulled out a chicken with a little note tied to its legs. You may be sure he thought himself a lucky fellow; the soldiers are always so glad to get a word of good-will along with their presents. The note merely said, "This is Billy's only chicken; and he wants the soldier that gets it to write, and let him know if it tastes good;" and gave the address.

So, after the officers had had a grand Thanksgiving dinner of turkey and hard-tack, with thoughts of home for sauce, and songs and stories for the dessert, the lieutenant drew up to the chicken-box for a desk, and wrote Billy a nice long letter. Perhaps you have had a soldier's letter yourself, so that you know how interesting they are. Well, in a few days, back came an answer. Billy was very glad the lieutenant enjoyed his chicken so much, and hoped he would always eat chicken and hard-tack when he could get them, and that, when he couldn't get the chicken, he would just eat hard-tack, and let alone whisky anyhow.

"Now that was a stampede on the lieutenant," said the captain; "for he had soaked pretty hard. He really didn't know what to do. 'I don't suppose 'twould pay to lie to that little feller,' says he; 'and as to giving up the whisky, I can't go that. I like to get his little letters, though; and besides, who knows but what he has a sister?' Finally he made a compromise of it by writing the boy he would promise to drink no more whisky before Christmas."

You know it is not very long from Thanksgiving to Christmas; but Billy wrote back that his sister Mary said, if he let it alone till Christmas, perhaps he would conclude to go without it all the time. "And sure enough," said the captain, "the little boy and his sister between them have kept the man off from whisky from that day to this;" it was in midsummer he was telling me. "It has been hard enough for him sometimes; but he hasn't taken a drop."

A boy that has persuaded a man out of drinking whisky has done something worth living for.

For the Child at Home.

WILLIE'S COURAGE.

"Well, I would not have gone and hid after it, anyhow, would you, Neddie?" said Willie, as they lay talking over the Sunday-school lesson after they went to bed. The lesson was the sin of Adam and Eve, and the hiding in the garden.

"I don't know," said Eddie, who was a little younger, but the more thoughtful of the two. "I suppose they were ashamed because they had sinned, and did not know what to do."

"Well, I wouldn't: I would at least have come out and owned it."

Next morning, as soon as breakfast was over, the first question from each of the boys was, "Now may I go out, mother?" Mrs. Clark told them it was rather too cold and damp then; but, if they would play with their cards and dominoes an hour, they might go out as much as they liked; only they must not go into Mr. Dean's store.

She went to her room, and sat down by her window to read. She had been there but a few moments when she saw Willie come slowly down the walk, and stand, with his hands in his pockets, leaning over the gate. Presently he opened the gate, and stepped out; then, after standing a few moments, he crossed the street with three bounds, and slipped stealthily into Mr. Dean's store. Mrs. Clark watched all this with a tearful eye, and wondered how Willie could skip with so light a step, with such a sin on his heart.

She closed her book, put on her bonnet and shawl, and picked her way across the muddy street, using Willie's little foot-prints for her own steps. Just as she lifted the latch, she caught a glimpse of a little figure disappearing behind some bags of meal piled high in the centre of the store. She opened the door; but no Willie was to be seen: she called; but no Willie appeared. On a chair just opposite the door lay a coat and scarf which Mrs. Clark knew well.

The loving eyes which now looked in vain for Willie had followed the needle through every stitch in that little coat; and the loving hands which now held the door open had often tied that scarf round Willie Clark's neck.

Mrs. Clark asked the store-boy, who was lazily lounging on the counter, where Willie was.

Stepping behind the bags, he led Willie out, blushing and confused. He was ashamed of himself, and afraid even to look into the dear face of his mother. He felt as if he would give all the world if he could hide somewhere, no matter where, from that face. Mrs. Clark led him quietly home, and bade him spend the morning alone in his chamber. Ah! Willie, it was only last night that you were saying, if you were Adam and Eve, you would not have hidden; but you forgot that we can not be bold and courageous, and be children of Satan too.

It is Satan's delight to make us ashamed of ourselves, and afraid to look up into the faces of our dear mother and dear heavenly Father. Aneka.

For the Child at Home.

THE WAY OF TRANSGRESSORS IS HARD.

"Mr. L— told our class to-day that he wanted each of us to have something to say next Sabbath that would prove these words from Proverbs to be true: 'The way of transgressors is hard.' Can't you help me, father?"

"Perhaps so, Dick. You ought to learn that lesson, and learn it well. We'll see. The week is before us."

Dick was apt to forget his duty. His father, as well as some other friends, knew that he needed to find this out. Perhaps many of you are like him in

this respect; and there are various ways in which the lesson of that verse in Proverbs may be learned, some of them far harder even than Dick's was.

"There's a bumble-bees' nest down at the end of the field," said Dick's father, Monday morning. "They won't harm any one if they're let alone. But don't you meddle with them, Dick: remember now; I charge you to keep away from them."

When Wednesday afternoon came, Dick and his playmate Will met to pass the half-holiday together. Then Dick thought of the bumble-bees' nest; and, choosing not to heed his father's charge, he proposed to Will to go and break up the nest, and have some fun.



"Good! let's do it. But here comes Charley! He'll go in for it with us."

"No, he won't. He's always afraid of a scrape. The first thing he'll think of will be getting stung."

"Let's see now. Charley! hurry up, and go with us."

"What is it?"

"Why, you see, Dick says there's a bumble-bees' nest down in the field, and we're going to break 'em up. Come!"

"Oh, that's it! Well, I guess you and Dick better go without me. I've seen bumble-bees before; and besides, I'm on my way to the store for father;" and Charley hurried off.

"I told you so, Will; but let's go ahead, and see if we an't smart enough to have something worth telling of about this business."

They reached the spot, and reconnoitered. Two or three lively fellows were making their way into a crevice among the stones, and were soon out of sight, while as many more left it as the boys came up.

"Now, Will, I'll take a stick, and give them a good smart punch; and you stand by with this shingle to knock them down as they come out."

Dick thrust in the stick, and turned over two or three stones. There was a furious buzzing, and then the indignant inmates made a rush upon the boys. They used their weapons, the stick and the shingle, with some success at first; but directly one of the bees managed to get his sting into Dick's ear, when, with a cry of pain, he started on a run. Will started in another direction, and was fortunate enough to escape the notice of all the bees but one, and that one he beat down with his shingle; but a crowd of the now thoroughly aroused swarm beset

Dick as he ran, darting upon him here and there till he had received stings enough to teach him that a father's command could not be disobeyed, nor a bumble-bees' nest stirred up, with impunity. At length his cries brought help, and the besieging army withdrew to repair the damages to their nest.

When Dick's father came home that night, his son was a pitiful object to look upon. "How's this, Dick?" asked his father.

"It's the bumble-bees," sobbed the suffering boy.

"Well, Dick, I'm sorry. You've been punished enough, my son: when you meet your teacher next Sabbath, you will need no better story to tell than that of your own experience to-day to prove the truth of the words he gave you from the Bible."

If there were room here for more, young readers, Dick's experience would be a good subject. There's many a sin, which, if "meddled with," is sure to bring upon our heads a swarm of troubles far more to be dreaded than the bees. There is many a sorrow laid up for the transgressor, both in this world and the next, far more painful and harder to bear than the sting. "The way of transgressors is hard." Uncle Paul.

For the Child at Home.

GOING TO GRANDMA'S.

A little maid with soft brown hair,
And hazel eyes, I often see
Tripping along, a picture fair,
Singing the while a merry glee,
Going to grandma's.

No cloud o'ershades that open brow,
No cares disturb that soul's sweet trust,
As on she speeds, now quick, now slow,
Like a sweet bird to sheltered nest,
Going to grandma's.

Full well she knows the greeting fond
That waits the darling's coming there;
The goodies, cooked with skill not found
In modern days of dainties rare,
For her at grandma's.

She loves each tree on the dear old place,
The chickens, cow, and old black cat;
But most she loves with care to trace
Where her own mother played or sat,
Living at grandma's.

Ah, happy child! as years pass on,
Thy mother's home will fade from sight;
Grandparents, parents, all be gone,
And gone these joys of childhood bright,
With all that's grandma's.

But in that fairer home above,
Where pain nor parting ever come,
With grandpa, parents, all you love,
May you be gathered near Christ's throne,
Ever with grandma! L.

For the Child at Home.

LITTLE JULIA.

In a tenement house on one of the crowded streets of New-York City, there lives a dear little girl three years old. She has blue eyes and light hair, and is plump and cunning. Her father is dead; and her mother is obliged to earn a living for herself and the child by going out to wash for different families day by day, and is forced to leave little Julia at home without care. So she runs about and plays with other children, good or bad, and is learning a great deal of naughtiness. Only think! This baby has already learned to swear! Her mother told me, that, before she was out of bed the other day, she took God's name in vain! The little lips that should reverently lip "Our Father who art in heaven" so early parted for the utterance of profane words! It nearly breaks her poor mother's heart; and yet she has to leave her to these evil influences that always surround the destitute. One day, a large boy gave

